

PATHWAYS

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No. 2

A WEDDING OF LANGUAGE TEACHING TO COOPERATIVE LEARNING

In the usual classroom, we have one teacher teaching a group of forty students. When we use the cooperative learning strategy, if each student is motivated and knows how to help each other, we have forty teachers instead of one in each classroom. A cooperative learning situation provides a positive feeling tone in the classroom because they receive positive feedback from everyone in the classroom rather than just one teacher. The students take responsibility for their own behaviour and their academic work. Some of the social skills that they develop as a result of cooperative learning are active listening, strong voice, happy talk, participation of every one, quiet voice when needed, quick work and taking turns. They learn to accept each others' suggestions and opinions, willing to offer abundance of ideas and also to agree to disagree on some points.

An integrated language lesson consists of learning to listen, speak, read and write.

The traditional class does not give many opportunities for students to talk. Listening and speaking has to be brought consciously into the curriculum in order to enhance reading and writing. Listening and speaking goes hand in hand. When the students do not have to speak much, they lose their interest in teacher's talk. In traditional system, the class is structured such that only one child can speak to the whole class at a time. Addressing the whole class is terrifying for some children. If they speak in small groups, and every one in the small group is sharing their ideas, the fear, or inhibition in speaking to the class is not there. Hence group discussions, interviews etc. will facilitate them to freely share.

In a classroom the opportunity for reading aloud is very limited. If they are in small groups of five or six, all the six of them can read parts of a lesson aloud in turn while others are listening. Give the group few questions from the lesson so that they can formulate the answers together, the listening will be strengthened.

Example of a language lesson

The children must be made to form groups of five or six. Each group is asked to read the lesson and each child is given a role such as facilitator, recorder, reporter, time keeper, encourager, materials manager, quiet master, checker. The facilitator make sure that every one in the group participates. The recorder takes the notes on the discussion. The reporter provides the summary of discussion to the whole class, the time keeper see to it that the work assigned is being done in the time allotted, the materials manager makes sure that all the materials needed for the task of the group is organised, the encourager sees to it that positive feedback is provided to every one as and when some of the group provides a good idea, contributes to the work of the group, takes initiative and so on. The quiet master makes sure that the voice level of the groups is under control so as not to disturb other groups. The checker checks whether the material is learned and understood by every one in the group. The roles must be rotated in different sessions. Some roles may be added or deleted depending upon the task of the group sessions or lessons.

After the roles are assigned and duties of each role is explained and clarified, the teacher provides them with the task objective. For example, the teacher asks each group to take a particular lesson in language

and ask the children to preview the lesson by looking at the heading of the lesson. In other words without reading the lesson fully, let the children look at the heading of the lesson and discuss what they think is the lesson content. Let them freely express what they think will be the lesson content. If necessary, ask them to read the end of the chapter questions to facilitate this discussion. Let the recorder take the notes of these discussion. The facilitator summarizes the discussion at different intervals of discussion. At the end of the discussion, let the reporter read the summary to the group or class. This activity naturally involves thinking, listening to others and speaking.

Now the teacher changes the objective or task for the group. The teacher ask the groups to read the lesson and list all the difficult words (unknown vocabulary) from the lesson. The group divides the lesson into six parts and one child at a time reads the lesson in turn for the whole group to listen. This gives a chance to every one in the group to read aloud. As and when a difficult or unknown word comes up any one who does not understand that word mention the word and the reporter notes it down. Thus they get all the difficult words which any one of them find as unknown.

The teacher now ask the group to guess the meaning of those words in the given situations. Taking word by word, the group looks at the text content to guess the meaning. It is possible that some of the meanings will be known to somebody in the group. Let them put down the meanings which they think will suit in that context. This will involve a lot of thinking and usage of words in a given context. Now the teacher ask the group to look into the dictionary to find the meanings of these words and select the suitable meaning of the given context. Once this is done, let the group make a sentence of their own using these words with the meaning they have selected. The reporter reads out these words and sentences to the class. This process involves a good learning strategy which they can use in learning any new matter without the help of teacher. In other words they became active learners than passive recipients of any content.

The teacher now give another objective or task for the group. Read the lesson carefully and make a list of all the questions that can be formulated about the content of the lesson. Again the group read the lesson in turn (read aloud) paragraph by paragraph and make a list of questions on each paragraph. Every one shares a number of questions that can be asked from each paragraph. When they finish reading, let them make the general questions on the whole or part of the lesson.

This list is prepared by the recorder. The facilitator, the encourager and the checker make sure that all these questions can be answered by every one in the group.

Exchange this list of questions with the list of questions from another group and see whether they can answer all the questions in that list. It has been found that the learning by this approach is far more superior than just learning questions and answers in the traditional manner.

Some other activities that can be carried out in the same manner are :-

1. Read the lesson and pick out all the similies that is used in the lesson. Make your own sentences using these
2. Pick out all the adjectives that are used in the lesson. Make sentences of your own using these adjectives.
3. Make a list of six sentence which are in active voice and change them into passive.
4. Make a flow chart in pictorial form on the content matter of the lesson.
5. Compose a poem or a story to depict the moral of the lesson.
6. Illustrate the lesson in pictorial form.

There is no limit in formulating objectives or task on a lesson. The important thing is that the children should get lots of opportunity to participate in active listening, active sharing of ideas (speaking), reading (especially reading aloud) and finally writing what they have learned. The cooperative structured lesson makes sure that every one is involved deeply in thought process and every one has learned what the teacher has planned for.

The teacher is a guide on the side in the learning process. He/she is not a age on the stage performing. The performers are the students themselves. The one who thinks more on a subject or topic learns it more. The one who talk more on a subject/topic learns it better.

In the traditional class, the teacher thinks most, the teacher talks most and as a result the teacher learns most. Let us give a chance for the children to think, to talk, to read, to write and let them learn better in the classroom.

GEOMETRY WITH PAPER FOLDING

We teachers are tempted to teach the geometrical concepts in mathematics in an abstract manner. The understanding of the geometrical concepts in abstract manner using only the instrumental box and logical reasoning is good in its own way. But a real understanding of the physical concept of angles, shapes and their properties will become real for the children only if they handle concrete objects. One of the method found very effective is using paper folding. What is given in this article is only some hints as a starting point to use paper folding towards this end.

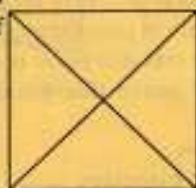
e.g. : Angles

Objective : Children will be able to experience a physical dimensions of various angles. For example 90° , 60° , 45° , 30° , 15° and their multiples.

(a) 90° or right angle.

Material : a piece of paper.

Fold an angle of 90° using this piece of paper.



Fold the paper anywhere and make a crease. This crease will give you a line which represent 180° . Fold it once more along this crease.



Make a crease along the new fold. You have an angle of 90° . Use this 90° angle to measure various corners of tables, doors, windows, room corners, book corners etc. to see where these are 90° . Measure corners of other objects and see whether these corners are acute, obtuse or right angles. Some experience like

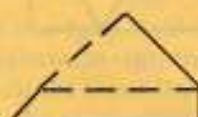
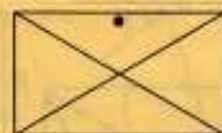
this will give the physical dimension of 90° . Open this paper and see four right angles where the two crease intersect.

Fold this 90° into two equal parts.



(b) 60°

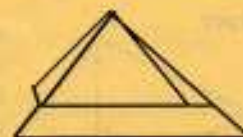
Material : a piece of paper. Preferably rectangular piece. All sides of this paper are straight lines. i.e. each line segment of the rectangle is a straight angle of 180° .



Take a point on one side of the rectangle. Fold the top corners of the rectangular piece such that one side on top of the paper and the other side at the back. Make sure that the folded edges coincide with crease. Thus the 180° is divided equally into three parts. This will give three 60° angles at the point on the edge of the rectangle.

Use this folded piece of 60° angle to measure and check the measure of angles of different objects.

(c) 30° , 15° and making of a protractor.



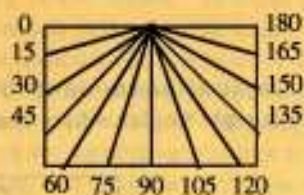
Fold the angle of 60° into two equal parts to get 30° . Make a crease.



Fold this again into two equal parts to get 15° . Make a crease, open the whole paper and see what you get. A protractor made by you. Write the angles.

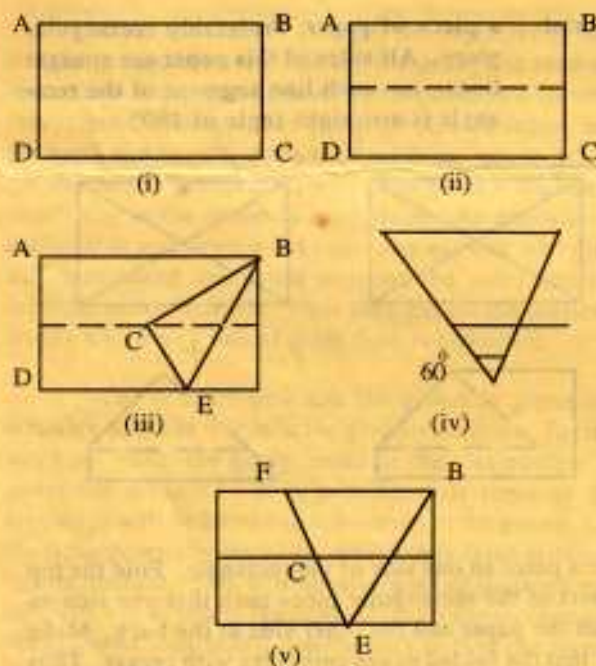


Use this to measure various angles.



(d) To make an equilateral triangle.

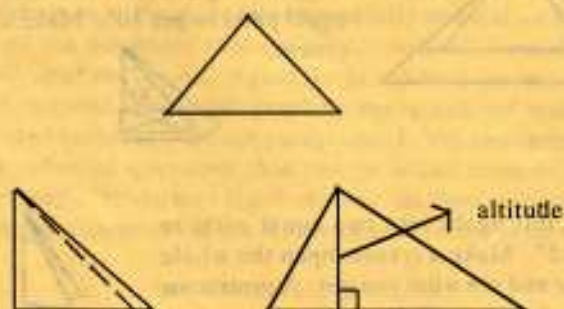
Material : a rectangular piece of paper.



Take the rectangular sheet and make a crease at the centre as shown. Fold the corner inwards. Along B E such that corner C touches the central crease. Fold the paper along C E so that corner D is on the opposite side. Open the paper. B E F is an equilateral triangle.

(e) To fold an altitude of a triangle.

Material : a triangular piece of paper.

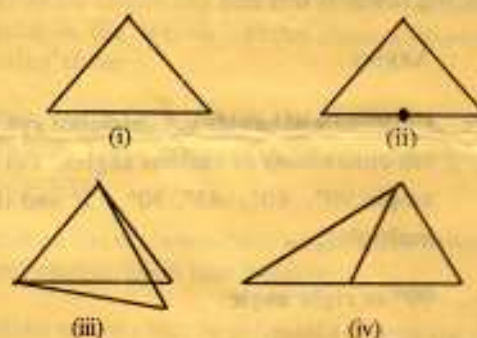


Fold the paper at the vertex along the opposite edge so that the folded edge coincide with remaining part of the edge. Make the crease and open the paper. The crease represent the altitude. You may repeat this with each of the vertex and its opposite side and find that all the three altitudes intersect at one point.

(f) Medians.

Material : a triangular piece of paper.

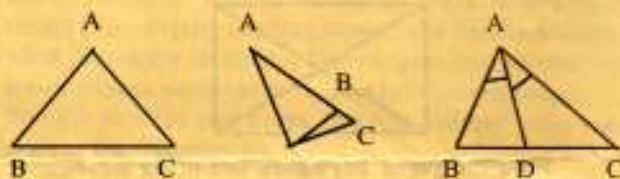
Mark the mid point of one side. Fold through this point and the opposite vertex. Make the crease. This crease represent the median.



Repeat this process for all the medians and you will see that all of them pass through a point. By proper folding we can see that this point is equidistant from all three corners and hence this point of intersection is circumcentre.

(g) Angle bisectors.

Material : any triangular piece of paper.



Fold A B along A C at the corner A so that A B and A C coincide. Open the paper and you get the crease which is the angle bisector of angle A. Repeat this at all three vertices and see that all these meet at a point. By proper folding you can see that the three sides are equidistant from this point. A circle can be drawn with this point as the centre touching all three sides. This point is called the incentre.

(h) Lines of symmetry for a rectangle.

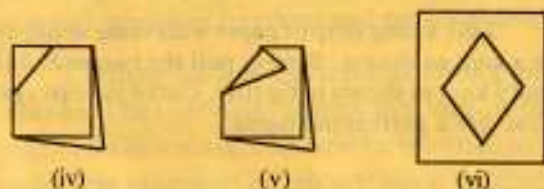
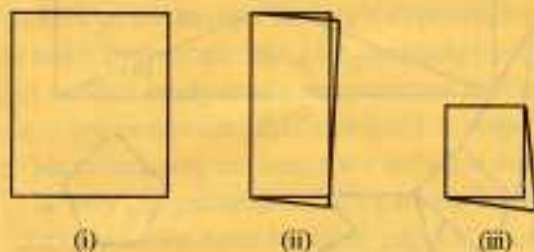
Material : a rectangular piece of paper.



Fold the paper into half vertically (one line of symmetry). Fold the paper into half horizontally (another line of symmetry). Place the mirror and observe the symmetry. Make any other crease and see whether we can get any more lines of symmetry.

(i) To make a rhombus.

Material : a rectangular piece of paper.

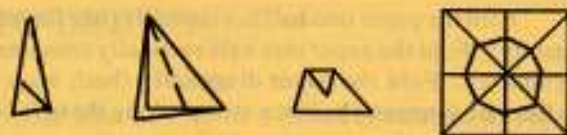
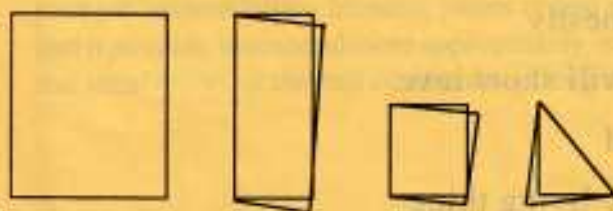


Fold the paper into half. Fold once more to make it quarters. Now fold obliquely the folded corner as shown. Make a good crease. Open the paper and see the rhombus. Can you clearly see that

- (i) four sides are equal.
- (ii) opposite angles are equal.
- (iii) diagonals bisect each other.

(j) To make a octagon.

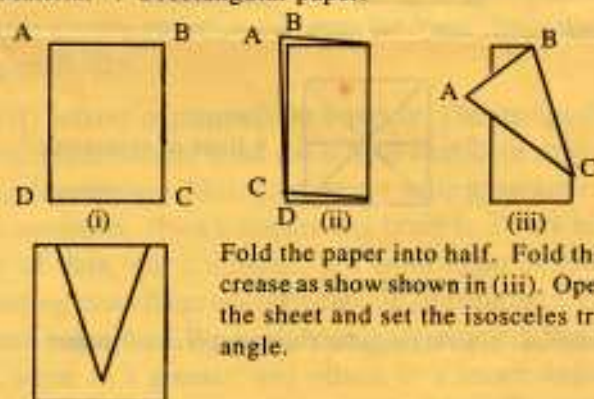
Material : a square piece of paper.



Make a vertical fold at the centre. Now fold this folded paper horizontally into quarter. Fold this such that one of the corners coincides with the opposite corner. Make a good crease. Fold again once more to get the angle bisector of top corner. Open this fold only. Now fold the top corner down such that this corner is aligned to this angle bisector. Make a good crease. Open the paper and here is your regular octagon.

(k) To make an isosceles triangle.

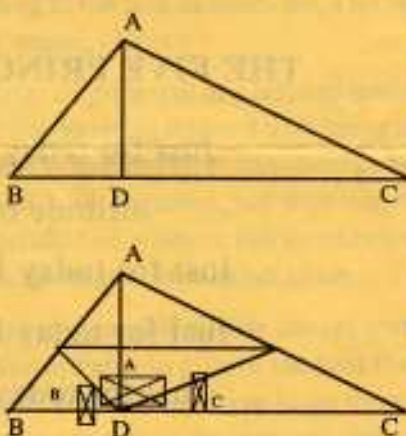
Material : a rectangular paper.



Fold the paper into half. Fold this crease as show shown in (iii). Open the sheet and set the isosceles triangle.

(l) To prove that the angles of a triangle together makes 180° .

Material : a triangular piece of paper.



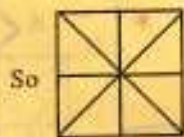
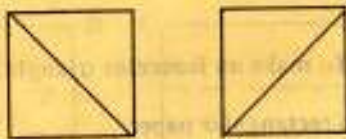
Fold the triangle to get one of the altitude. Fold vertices A, B and C to meet at the foot D of the altitude.

These angles align with the base line at D. You can clearly see that the angles A, B, C, together form a angle which is equal to 180° .

(m) Lines of symmetry of a square.

Material : square piece of paper.

Fold the paper into half horizontally (one line of symmetry). Fold the paper into half vertically (one line of symmetry). Fold the paper diagonally (both ways) (two lines of symmetry). Place mirror along these four lines and observe the symmetry. Make any other crease and try with the mirror for symmetry.

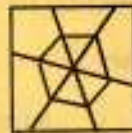
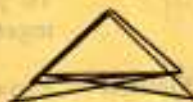


So

4 lines of symmetry.

(n) To make a hexagon.

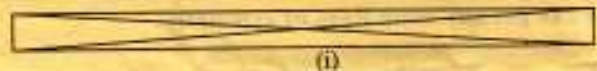
Material : a rectangular / square piece of paper.



Fold the paper into half. Make 60° angle on the folded edge. Fold it once more to get 30° . Open this fold and fold the top corner to align with the central line. Make a good crease. Open the paper and see the hexagon.

(o) To make a pentagon.

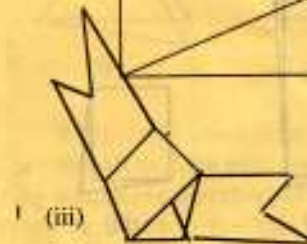
Material : a rectangular / square piece of paper.



(i)



(ii)



(iii)



(iv)

Take a long strip of paper with same width and make a knot as shown. Slowly pull the two ends until you get a knot as shown in fig (iii). Cut off the extra part and you get a perfect pentagon.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF REIKI

Just for today I will live the
attitude of gratitude

Just for today I will not worry

Just for today I will not anger

Just for today I will do my
work honestly

Just for today I will show love
and

respect for every living thing

LEARNING TO LET GO

Readers of **Pathways** are mainly teachers and principals who belong to a broad spectrum of schools. Many of them are very achievement-conscious and make great efforts to maintain high performance. The heads of schools make heavy and firm demands from the teachers. The teachers, (not wanting to be left behind) make equally strong demands on the students. The parents, many of them successful and highly motivated for high performance of their children, also add their share and urge gently and possibly not so gently to get the child to move ahead. As a result, when the results come at the end of the school year or when the Board results are announced, there is much to feel happy about and to celebrate.

I wish to share with the readers a personal experience of mine. I have also been an achievement-oriented person and I believe I still am. But, from the kind of compulsions and pressures that I put on myself and others in the seventies, I have come a long way. **I have learned to relax and to let go.** That is not to be understood as not caring for standards and high performance. I still do. But I have developed a greater degree of sensitivity to the contexts and situations of others, their mind-sets, their strengths and weaknesses, and hence now find it possible to exercise greater patience, can provide more support and encouragement and am able to delegate greater responsibility.

Many of us, I think, (and I surely include myself) behave as **puppets on a string**. The strings that control us are many : society's expectations, parental expectations, what the school next door may do or has achieved, etc. etc. Many schools have introduced computers. Most of us do not write programmes, but use the ready-made programmes that are in the computer. If we compare our brain to a very high capacity computer, that can hold a huge quantity of data, our computer, fed from other people's expectations, injunctions, their do's and don'ts, including those from our own parents and teachers, tend to largely programme our life patterns of thinking and behaviour. We have been programmed. We are controlled. We have become puppets on a string, some to a greater, and others to a lesser degree. Understand the situation, become aware of it and consciously begin to take charge of our own lives. That way lies personal freedom and personal choices.

Coming back to the topic of letting go, I find that I am able to achieve more because I am more relaxed. The (nervous) energy that was earlier spent for self-preservation, for maintaining an image, or to hold on to a mask, can now be invested in attending to the task in hand. So, a lot more gets done. And much less reason to develop tension headaches or worse, ulcers !

The fear that many of us experience is that a relaxed principal or a relaxed teacher in the classroom will not be respected by the school community. I'm not equating relaxed with being a jelly fish, or letting everyone feel that they are in a country club, where any of the members can come and do what they please. Norms there will be and enforcement of them as well, with firmness, not with harshness or anger. I can think of one of my senior teachers, who was the gentlest of women, but an excellent teacher and firm whom the students respected and there was no discipline problem in her class.

So, what I am suggesting is this : **come home to yourself a little more; own yourself, possess yourself, Be yourself** and then you will find that you are able to give of the best that God has endowed you with. You will be able to optimize performance. You will not have to go through life and through your job responsibility, blaming others or just reacting to situations, persons and conditions. You will find it possible to respond more appropriately, more creatively. And it carries a reward : the gift of peace and satisfaction, at the end of a hard and long day.

Fr. T.V. Kunnunkal, S.J.

THREE DAYS

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, Two days
which should be kept from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is yesterday with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders,
its aches and pains.

Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.

All the money in the world cannot erase a single word we said.

Yesterday is gone beyond all recall.

The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow

With its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise, and perhaps its poor
performance.

Tomorrow is also beyond our immediate control.

Tomorrow's sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds, but it
will rise.

Until it does, we have no stake in tomorrow for it is yet unborn.

This leaves only one day --- today.

Anyone can fight the battle for just one day.

It is only when you and I add the burden of those two awful eternities, yesterday
and tomorrow, that we break down.

It is not the experience of today that drives us mad.

It is the remorse or bitterness for something which happened yesterday or the
dread of what tomorrow may bring.

Let us therefore do out best to live but one day at a time.

BUILDING POSITIVE SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS

A lot of attention is given in our school curriculum on cognitive development of the child especially in the three 'R's. But education has to develop the child not only cognitively but also in affective and psychomotor areas of development. Least attention is given to the growth of social behaviour of the child. This article emphasises the need and tactics of developing prosocial behaviour of the child.

Some of the prosocial goals that a teacher has to develop in the child are :-

- showing sympathy and kindness
- helping
- giving
- accepting food, toys, books etc.
- sharing
- showing positive verbal and physical contact
- comforting other person in distress
- donating to others who are less fortunate
- showing concern
- responding to beavered peers
- taking the perspective of another person
- showing affection
- cooperating with others in play or in completing a task.

Introducing a prosocial curriculum into our existing curriculum is possible if we plan well for these things to happen. It will not happen suddenly. It needs time, planing and execution of the plan patiently and systematically. The strategies for the same are given below:

1. Value, model and acknowledge prosocial behaviours.

(a) **Value:**

You as a teacher has to value and emphasise consideration for others' needs.

Children become easily aware of what their

significant adults admire and value. Teachers who emphasises the importance of children helping other children wherever possible will find that their children undertaking lots of helping activities.

(b) **Model**

The teacher has to model the prosocial behaviours.

Children usually model many behaviours that we do.

They want to imitate -" Monkeys see - Monkeys do"

This is very true in the behaviours of young children. Teacher who model prosocial behaviours influence the childrens' willingness to behave prosocially. Modelling has been found to be a more powerful force than preaching. Teachers and parents who are kind, considerate and compassionate - influence young children to imitate them.

(c) **Acknowledge**

- (i) Label and identify prosocial behaviours. Even we adults are happy when others identify and acknowledge our positive deeds. Observe positive social behaviours in children however small they are, when they interact with other adults and peers and encourage them through your comments and expressions. Let them know that "consideration towards others", "cooperating with classmates", "helping one another", "sharing with others" are behaviours that you really appreciate in them. In a way, labeling their positive behaviours in specific way than just stating "That is good", "you are nice". State "I see that you are considerate to others" "your behaviour is helpful to everyone" etc.

- (ii) Attribute positive social behaviour to each child. Every person is looking for positive appreciation for oneself. Though collective appreciation is also helpful, the individual appreciation is more powerful. "You shared because you like to help others" "You are the kind of person who likes to help others". These kind of comments will influence the child more powerfully to become more helpful than general comments such as "you are all helpful children".

A good teacher personalise these attributions like "you really try to be helpful to the new child in our class who is shy in finding a friend" so that each child feels special.

(iii) *Do not over use external rewards.*

A teacher once gave a 'sticker' to a child in the class for a positive social behaviour exhibited in the class. One of the children went home disappointed that he did not get a sticker from the teacher and told his mother "First you have to be bad and then turn good and then you get a sticker".

2. *Encourage understanding of children's own and others' percepts.*

- (i) Acknowledge and encourage understanding and expression of children's feelings. Empathy is the key word here. Helping children to understand and feel with others in their happiness, fears, sadness, anger and feeling of pain etc. depends mainly on the children's previous experiences of these emotions in themselves. Teachers need to help the children express their feelings in words and to understand their feelings. Acknowledge their feelings and reflect their feelings with comments such as "It seems that you are feeling really sad about it" you look that you are really angry because of that incident". "It seems that you want to talk to me now".

- (ii) *Helping the child to notice and respond to the feelings of others can be quite effective in teaching them to be considerate to others.*

Two kindergarten children were fighting each other for a toy. One of them hit the other. The teacher lovingly held this boy bent down to be at the eye level with the child. The teacher pointed out the feelings of the other child. "He is very sad and hurt. What can you do to make him feel better". The child paused, observed the other child's face and offered the toy. If a child is capable of identifying the emotional state and experience the feelings of another, it will contribute to the positive social behaviour.

Role playing is a good method of teaching children to experience the feelings of others. Give the children different stories having emotional and conflicting characters and encourage them to role play then. This helps them to understand how the different characters feel. Encourage them to switch the roles and act out the stories. This will provide them with a different perspective of their feelings.

(iii) *Emphasise the consequences of prosocial and antisocial behaviours.*

The teacher at times stress the importance of the positive social behaviours and its positive consequences such as happiness for everyone. She also stresses the negative consequences of antisocial behaviours. Emphasise to the aggressor the results of hurtful actions on others.

"Look, that hurts him". "I cannot let you hurt another child" "he is crying" "I don't want any body to hurt you" "We want a happy class here".

- (iv) *Help the children to be assertive about positive social behaviour.* If a child is capable of emphasizing with the feelings of others or able to understand the perspective of others in social situations and if the child is assertive about these feelings of others, the chances are that the child possess positive social behaviour. Suppose one child is teasing or hurting another child. A third child who emphasises with the feelings of the victim and if this child is assertive, he will boldly tell the bully to stop teasing or hurting, as hurting others is not the right thing to do. Such an assertive child imbibes the value of positive social behaviour more effectively.

3. *Encourage problem solving behaviour for positive social behaviour.*

- (i) *Encourage to find various alternative solutions in conflict situations.* Teacher can help the children to discover when their feelings and wishes are the same or different from other children or whether some or all the children want to take part in an activity which one prefers. Help the children to think of alternative solutions to their social conflicts and to visualise the consequences of each behaviour. The ability to think of more strategies is associated with increased social functioning.

- (ii) *'Questioning' to promote positive social behaviour.*

When a child exhibits an antisocial behaviour, the teacher instead of asking "Why you did this way", ask "How does that help you" "How is that helping the group" "How is that helping anybody". This approach has been found helping the children to recognise and take responsibility for their own behaviours.

(iii) *Presenting positive social behaviours to children.*

Telling children stories of prosocial behaviours, presenting pictures of prosocial behaviours of people, role playing stories of prosocial behaviours and eliciting from them answers to questions such as "What is happening in the story or picture or role play? Make them aware of the feelings of the person who is being helped and that of the person who is helping.

(iv) *Use specific structures in the teaching methodology in building specific social skills.*

Cooperative learning structures are effective ways to develop positive social behaviours. When they work in groups with specific roles for each one and participating in the cooperative learning method, the children are encouraged to use polite words, listen to one another talking, share ideas and materials, take turns, understand others points of views, solve problems together, appreciating one another are all part of cooperative lesson structure which will develop positive social behaviour among children.

(d) (i) *Use positive discipline*

Love, concern are important for the child to develop positive social behaviours. Use of positive reinforcement, empathising with the child and reasoning are some of the ways to help. But love alone is not enough. There is a need for firmness, clear rules and explanations. But firmness or rigid rules alone is not enough. When love and concern combined with firmness, the result is better and the children are more likely to behave positively. The more non authoritative and non-punitive the teacher, the higher the children's level of reasoning.

(ii) *Respond to aggressive behaviours, provide alternatives to these behaviours.*

Do not ignore aggression or permit aggression to be expressed. Don't assume that this venting of aggression will release tension. An aggressive behaviour that is ignored does not disappear.

Redirect antisocial activities to more acceptable actions. A child who is throwing a stone at another child may be redirected to throw a ball back and forth with another child. When a child is angry and express this anger by actions, teach the child to express this by using appropriate 'words'.

Help the child to use 'I' statements to express the feelings. "I feel upset and angry when my work is disrupted" "I cannot finish my home-work if you take away my books" "I feel hurt when you use such words at me".

(iii) *Offer choices*

Children who are struggling to assert their autonomy cooperate with the teacher more readily if they feel empowered to make choices. "You can have your maths test on Monday or Wednesday. You make your choice and let me know". "You may play foot ball or cricket during your games period. Make up your mind yourself". "You may watch the T.V. programme today for 1/2 hour. You decide which programme you would like to watch". Later comment on how the children followed the rule.

(e) *Provide interactions through play.*

Provide a lot of play opportunities. Place a child who is shy and timid or aggressive child with a socially skilled playmate to play or work together.

(f) *Adult-child relationships*

Children learn to enjoy being with other children when they have experienced adults who are positive, caring, loving and responsive. When adults responds to a child in affectionate, kind empathetic ways, the child learns to communicate with peers in more positive ways. They are willing to take turns, listen, help others.

(g) *Release tension by body relaxation techniques.*

Relaxation exercises can be a good activity for releasing tensions. For small children, sand play water play, music and movement are good exercises to release tension. Listening to music and dancing are also found to be very helpful.

Focussed fantasy in which children close their eyes visualising themselves in a quiet forest, listening to the sounds of birds chirping, river flowing, enjoying cool breeze or warm sunshine etc. are also found to be very fruitful in releasing tensions.

In conclusion

The teachers' interaction in the classroom which makes a powerful difference in the atmosphere

and climate of the classroom. As teachers model kindness and respect, express appreciation for positive social behaviours, promote cooperation, make them

realise that their behaviours affect others, the positive social behaviours of children will increase.

EXPERIENCE

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In the last issue of Pathways, we looked at Context, the first of five elements in Ignatian or Integral Pedagogy. In this article we will look at Experience.

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND THE SCHOOL AIM

Experience is used in many contexts. You gain experience by working in an office and get an experience certificate. Visiting the Taj Mahal is an uplifting experience. Watching or taking part in a closely contested match is a thrilling experience. Being with a relative dying of cancer is a sad experience. Being involved in an accident is a terrifying experience. And sitting in class listening to a lecture may be a boring experience.

All the above examples can be classified as learning experiences. Learning is concerned with growth and the learning experience is meant to help us to grow. So the type of learning experience the student has will determine how he/she grows. Or to put it in another way, the way we hope our students will grow will determine the type of learning experience we introduce them to. The aim of Integral Pedagogy is to form a student of competence, conscience, compassion and commitment to the service of others. What type of learning experience is needed to help in this formation?

Two Approaches

Contrast two teachers. The first takes a text

book into the class, asks the students one by one to read aloud a story. The story is of a blind beggar man who saved a young boy from drowning in the village well and so was able to give up begging and start a small shop with the reward he received. The teacher then gives the word meanings, and finally asks the students to write out answers to factual questions at the end of the chapter. Or even dictates the answers to be memorised.

The second teacher uses her imagination, and gestures, to relate the story, or has prepared some students to act out the story, or/and asks the students to discuss in groups, questions about the story, questions that are not just factual but are concerned with the feelings aroused by the story. Or perhaps the teacher invites a blind man into the class to meet the students and tell his own story. Or may be the teacher asks the students to imagine they were blind and to write an incident in their lives. The teacher may even follow up the suggestion of students that they visit a school for the blind.

The Heart Level

It is clear that the second teacher has given a very rich learning experience, involving the head and especially the heart. In "Teaching Questioning and Learning" by Noral Morgan and Juliana Section, Bolton is quoted saying "Learning has to be felt to be effective... It is this essential feeling level that is often either not recognized or ignored by teachers. Only when

work is at an experiential feeling level can a change of understanding take place.

Integral Pedagogy is certainly concerned with a full intellectual learning experience in which the student is not only lead to memorisation but to higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy or to David Laezar's two story or three story intellects. A competent student is one who can think for herself, who can imagine, predict, apply principles, compare, contrast, analyse, synthesize. But the stress in Integral Pedagogy is on the feeling level of the experience. And the reason is clear. Our aim is to form students of compassion. Critical thinkers may produce novel ideas, but the compassionate person is the one who will feel with people and be moved to do something to make the world a better place. It is the heart that moves one to action.

The Curriculum and Experience

The curriculum is defined as "the sum total of learning experiences of the student in the school". So it includes the interaction with the syllabus, the co-curricular activities, the classroom climate, the total school climate, the type of school discipline, the vision of the school, the behaviour of the teachers and administration, the relation of the school to the neighbourhood. How do all these combine to help the student to grow affectively? How do they help the student to be compassionate and committed to the service of others? Is the total school climate one of competition or of cooperation. Competition is the opposite of compassion. Is the very admission process of the school one in which children of 5 years compete with one another for a place in the school by written testing and interviews? Is the school an island separated and kept 'clean' from any outsiders?

Direct Experience

Integral Pedagogy distinguishes direct and indirect or vicarious human experience. One may read about the sufferings of poor people or do a maths problem in which the sufferings of the poor are contextualised. This vicarious experience will lead to growth in the affective level and empathy with the poor. The teacher's role through careful lesson planning is to facilitate in the student such vicarious experiences. But actually going to the situation of the poor, being with them, listening to them, learning from them, working with them is a much stronger experience. This is a direct experience.

Integral Pedagogy insists that such direct experiences which afterwards are reflected upon are meant to be an essential learning experience of each student if the student is to really grow in compassion and commitment. Many schools provide such experiences

to students on an optional basis, e.g. for LTS members. But very few schools consider this as essential to the real learning process. Such remarks as:- How can we cover the syllabus? The parents will object. After all we do collect money for the poor. Our students are not rich - have been taken as challenges by some schools. May be the remark I heard from a student in a school that has a very well organised direct experience programme for all students from class 5 to class 12 is worth quoting: "In the beginning, I did find it hard, but now after 3 years, I am very happy indeed that the school has this programme."

I have learnt so much from the poor". That student was growing in competence but especially in compassion.

Experience and Evaluation

The type of learning experience the teacher gives is often mirrored in the examination paper he sets. If we analyse the questions of an examination, or the questions at the end of chapters of textbooks, most often the experience to be evaluated is a cognitive one, and that of the lowest level, that of memory of facts. There are very few questions on the affective level. And when the progress report card is given, the feedback to the parents very often leaves out the progress the student has made in the affective area. The school may state that its aim is a compassionate student, but there is little evidence of the seriousness of the aim in the feedback to the parents.

The Compassionate Student

Compassion is based on a feeling of oneness with one's fellow human beings and with all of creation. Compassion breaks down barriers. The compassionate person shares the joys and sorrows of others, and endeavours to increase the joys and lessen the sorrows. In a recent staff development workshop in Patna for teachers from Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, the teachers, in order to highlight the aim of compassion, to focus on areas for learning, and to help evaluate a student's progress in compassion, drew up a tentative profile of a compassionate student.

The student who seeks to be compassionate:

- is respectful, welcoming, aware of others' feelings, patient and supportive;
- is aware of his/her own limitations and weaknesses as challenges to growth;
- forgives and accepts others as they are;
- generously shares his/her talents, knowledge and

- time with others, irrespective of caste, creed, race, sex, economic status, etc.
- is aware of his/her own feelings and able to harness them creatively;
- is not judgmental in his/her attitudes;
- is open to change;
- is respectful of the environment and supportive of local, national conservation programmes;
- is aware of the hardships and injustices in the lives of the neighbourhood community;
- gives some of his/her time to community service.
- is aware of and concerned with today's environmental problems and supportive of efforts to preserve and develop the environment;
- is concerned for the physical, mental, emotional health of the students;
- welcomes parents and invites them to share in the teaching-learning process;
- is aware of and concerned for the social problems of the neighbourhood community;
- gives his/her time to some community service.

The Compassionate Teacher

The same teachers realized that if the students are to be formed as compassionate persons, they must catch this compassion from their teachers. Hence they drew up a tentative profile of a compassionate teacher which the reader could reflect on and probably perfect.

The teacher who seeks to be compassionate:

- knows, loves and trusts the students;
- is tolerant and listens sensitively to the students;
- is open to change;
- accepts his/her own weaknesses and limitations as challenges to growth;
- has a sense of humour and is optimistic;
- is reasonably flexible in handling disciplinary matters;

Feelings of a Teacher

I have come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom.

It is my personal approach that creates a climate.

It is my daily, mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.

In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.

In the next few decades there will be new learning environments and new means of instruction. One function will always remain with the teacher: to create the emotional climate for learning. No machine, sophisticated, as it may be, can do this job.

The Neglected Element

The learning experience in Integral Pedagogy is not merely the affective learning experience. It is the learning experience of the whole person, head, heart and hand. And it means the teacher must know the different learning styles of the students, must realize that the teacher has to teach less so that the student may learn more. The teacher is the guide, the mentor, the facilitator rather than the sage, the sole storehouse of knowledge. But in this article I have concentrated on the affective element because it is the most neglected and because it is intimately linked with forming a compassionate student. "There are sufficient examples from history of educational excellence narrowly conceived, of people extra-ordinarily advanced intellectually who, at the same time, remain emotionally undeveloped and morally immature. We are beginning to realize that education does not inevitable humanize society" Finally it must be said that an affective learning experience without reflection is not only insufficient but also could be dangerous. Hence, the next article will be on reflection, the central element in Integral Pedagogy.

BOOK REVIEW

TALK AND LEARN

Book '1' - Things Rs. 30

Book '2' - People Rs. 30

Book '3' - Places Rs. 30

Book '4' - Events

Author : Margret Patak

General Editor : Mary Ann Dasgupta

Published by : Cambridge Book House

These books are meant for pre-school and early primary children. They are designed as a graded series to stimulate conversation, develop vocabulary, observation and imagination. They also increase general knowledge and awareness of the environment. These books contain good colourful illustrations on which the teacher can stimulate the children to talk about by skillful methodical and logical questioning. Sample questions for teachers are provided. There are plenty of opportunities for children to involve themselves in activities in the book itself. More activities are suggested.

ABC Activity Book '1' Rs. 30

ABC Activity Book '2' Rs. 24 (work book)

Author : Margret Patak

General Editor : Mary Ann Dasgupta

Published by : Cambridge Book House.

These books along with its work books is meant to help children recognise names, shapes and sounds of letters of English alphabets. The exercises, and activity suggestions is meant to develop listening, observing, speaking and writing skills.

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There are some very important directions given to the teachers in the book. These can also be profitably used by the parents at home. The normal tendency in the class (more so, when the class is large) is to give the dictation, and mark the answers right or wrong. This is referred to as summative or judgmental evaluation. But a formative or developmental or supportive approach would be to give the exercise and then build on what has been produced and do some remedial explanations or provide follow-up drill.

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Learning More by Doing Less Content

So, the Educational Planning Group has put its best resources to develop a curriculum, that has a smaller content load than what is given in the Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) of the Government of India. In fact, recently, the World Bank had consultations with educational administrators in the country to evolve strategies and development of curriculum materials to give more teeth to achieve the goal of **Universal Primary Education**. The programme is to be initiated in 14 States of the country, with World Bank support. The content load is being scaled down from the MLL level. **The curriculum that the EPG has developed happily coincides with that thrust.** Learning more, by learning less, moving slowly, in order to gain greater speed later may not sound all that practical at first sight. But we find that intelligibility and understanding of concepts and operations, can come only through actual manipulatives and student activities. By learning by doing. By joyful discoveries. And with understanding, speed is a natural follow-on. But Speed with Accuracy - the two must go together in Maths.

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